



**Haines Borough
Planning Commission Meeting
April 16, 2015
MINUTES**

APPROVED

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG** – Chairman **Goldberg** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in Assembly Chambers and led the pledge to the flag.
2. **ROLL CALL** – **Present:** Chairman Rob **Goldberg**, Commissioners Lee **Heinmiller**, Robert **Venables**, Heather **Lende**, Brenda **Josephson**, and Don **Turner III**. **Absent:** Rob **Miller**
Staff Present: David **Sosa**/Manager, Jan **Hill**/Mayor, Tracy **Cui**/Planning and Zoning Technician III, Shawn **Bell**/Interim Harbormaster, and Carlos **Jimenez**/Public Facilities Director.
Also Present: Mike **Case** (Assembly liaison), Diane **LaCourse**, Ron **Jackson**, Gina **St. Clair**, Sean **Gaffney** and Ryan **Cook**.
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Venables suggested two items to be added:
 - 1) Communication between the commission and the Borough; and
 - 2) Jones Point Industrial Area.**Motion:** **Turner** moved to “approve the agenda as amended.” **Lende** seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – March 12, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes
Venables stated that #8 should read “Public Hearings”. For Item A, regarding height variance, he suggested that the PC approve up to 34’. He asked the staff to verify his comments from March 12th and amend the motion to insert his statement that led to 32’.
Lende asked comments be added to minutes; i.e., discussion with Roger Schnabel on safety of slide area in resource extraction.
Motion: **Heinmiller** moved to “approve the March 12, 2015 minutes as amended.” **Lende** seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
St. Clair first asked if public comment is permitted after a discussion item. She then read comments on the boat harbor and parking lot expansion, stressing increasing costs, reasons for not moving Lookout Park and budget cuts being made elsewhere that hurt the community.
6. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT** – None
7. **STAFF REPORTS**
 - A. **Planning & Zoning Staff Report**
Cui reported monthly permits and updates on projects.

Venables asked to add off-premises signs discussion to next month's agenda due to possible appeals submitted, and discussion of the ordinance submitted by Debra Schnabel in the past.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Haines Borough – Vacation of One Portion of Mathias Ave. Right-of-Way (ROW)

Goldberg opened the public hearing at 6:54 p.m.

Jimenez stated that the existing sewer does not get correct rates and there is a problem with sewer line under Smith home. This problem last year cost the Borough \$20,000 to clean up. An easement is needed to solve the problem and the PC is asked to pass a vacation ROW.

Goldberg closed the public hearing at 6:55 p.m.

Motion: **Turner** moved to "recommend the Assembly vacate one portion of the Mathias Ave. ROW." **Venables** seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Historic District/Building Review – None

B. Haines Borough Code Amendments

1. Lot Line Adjustment in HBC 18.100.025

Goldberg referred to the problem with non-conforming lots due to downtown area platted in 1917 and zoning regulations in 1970 creating conflict. Change would allow undersized lots to be platted and allow people to move lot lines around for undersized lots.

Motion: **Venables** moved to "add exception to Part C of code and amend to add that all lot line adjustments for non-conforming lots shall be approved by the Planning Commission." **Turner** seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Communications between the Commission and Borough

Venables addressed need to communicate more with other committees, the Assembly, the Borough and the public. There is a problem with PC not knowing if an item was worked on by the Assembly. The PC does not always get feedback.

Cui informed the commissioners that the Borough Lands Department meets twice a month, at which time she updates them on PC items. **Cui** will add comments from Lands Dept. meetings to her staff reports.

Goldberg stated that action forms are being used and agrees that the PC should meet three times on large projects. **Goldberg** also agreed that committee members should be invited to PC meetings.

C. Project Updates – None

D. Other New Business

1. South Portage Cove Harbor Expansion Project

LaCourse was dismayed that her written comments were not copied to the PC as requested when she sent them to the Assembly, including a proposal diagram. As

public comment, she added that she does not see citizens' comments passed onto the Assembly or the PC. She does not want Lookout Park changed or moved and is concerned about the economics of the project. She agrees that harbor expansion is needed, but does not see how it would bring in much-needed revenue. She feels the process is flawed and incomplete.

Gaffney stated that, as a member of the Tourism Advisory Board, he asked the Board to draft a letter of support for the project, and stated that an increase in harbor capacity is vital.

Venables stated a need to keep up with project updates. The breakwater is a good investment for now, and revenue will be generated with fees from slips and parking. He also sees the need to get committees together to work on solutions.

Hill stated that the Assembly has referred to other committee members for comments, and agrees that the PC should invite all committees related to a project to give feedback to the PC.

Goldberg stated that the PC has read through comments from all sources and sees several possibilities to make Lookout Park more user-friendly to all people. He also reminded the PC that the \$19 million in state money will expire in 2017 if not used, and that there are currently 90 people on the waiting list to get harbor slips. More slips and parking areas are needed, as well as areas to work on boats.

Lende stated concern over increasing costs if the project is not complete, and wants more ideas on how to use the \$20 million that we have now and asks how much can be done with that amount. She also wants to know if a formal public hearing is planned on the 95 per cent proposal for the project and asked that it be added to the May PC agenda.

Turner stressed the strong support of fishermen for the harbor expansion project, and asked why the raw fish tax--that has traditionally gone into the Borough general fund--cannot now be used to support the project.

Case wanted to let the public and PC members know that comments from the public and committees are being heard and getting to the right people. Parks & Recreation committee members are working to plan the move of Lookout Park based on people's comments and suggestions.

Josephson stated budget concerns, but supports the project and is concerned with the 50-year life of sea wall maintenance costs. She also prefers the rubble mound and understands that there was a challenge and need for more parking.

Heinmiller is concerned about the loss of the fishermen's ramp funding, and wanted to know when the funding will become available again. A new ramp is needed, as the old ramp will need to be replaced in the near future.

2. Jones Point Zoning

Venables wanted to know what the Takshanuk Watershed Council plans to do with the 50 acres they purchased. Venables also stated the concern for loss of industrial land in that area.

11. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Josephson reminded the PC that the closing of the forestry office in Haines brings up the problem of road maintenance. While the Forestry Dept. will not be pulling culverts, they will not be maintaining the roads. The Borough needs to be aware of road maintenance problems, such as wash outs, and the need for serviced roads for local

loggers and other users. She stated that there are different standards for forestry roads than Borough roads.

Sosa stated that the Assembly is aware of the problem and that a letter will be going to the Governor as the next step.

Lende stated concern over boarded-up buildings on Main Street and wanted ideas on how to get owners more proactive to make Main Street more attractive. She also was concerned about lack of trash pickup and saw the need for more enforcement, including removal of junk cars.

12. **CORRESPONDENCE** - None

13. **SET MEETING DATES**

A. Regular Meeting—Thursday, May 14, 2015.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**— 8:22 p.m.